

Building Collaborative Relationships

A Message from Barbara Faron Chief Executive Officer



Collaboration is a hot topic these days. I hope we can agree upon the fact that operating in the spirit of collaboration helps us ALL do a better job for the people we serve. Whether working together internally or building relationships with agencies outside of our organization, we collaborate to help individuals find the resources they need.

Collaboration became a key component of managed healthcare with the implementation of the Affordable Care Act in 2009. Prior to this, healthcare was relegated to silos. People were treated within a specific context or specialty. There was no real incentive to collaborate or to treat people holistically.

For the past seven years, healthcare professionals have worked together to intervene at a primary or preventative level to maximize the management of chronic conditions and avoid worst scenario outcomes. On the agency side, Federation will soon be integrating primary care services into our behavioral health services to better connect our members and provide a more holistic approach to care. We are excited to take this next step that will ultimately provide a higher level of service and care for our members.

It is through this collaborative effort that we actually improve the individual lives of those we serve. Our programs provide the support to help individuals living with mental illness and chronic conditions lead healthy, rewarding, independent lives. Programs routinely connect individuals to other services here at Federation or at outside organizations that will help them to reach their goals. To do that, staff must be resourceful, empathetic, adept at communicating, and compassionate. I am proud to say that the staff at Federation possesses all of these qualities and more. I want to thank all staff members for their ongoing efforts, for their enthusiasm, and hard work which have all helped make Federation the organization that it is.

Thank you, one and all, for your dedication to the needs of the people we serve and for working in the spirit of collaboration. Keep up the great work!

Carol Takes to the Street to Help Others



Carol is no stranger to life on the streets. For a decade, she and her brother were homeless. Finally, they turned to Federation's POWER program which, along with the Nursing Home Diversion Program, found them housing and changed their lives for the better.

Today, Carol, who is 61, is helping others in need. In November 2016, she became a Companion with Federation's Companion Program.

As a companion, Carol helps distribute food to homeless people, talks with others who have mental health diagnoses and offers support and advice based on her personal experience.

Her activities take place through the POWER Social group on Wednesdays, the POWER Outreach group on Thursdays and during visits to Federation's Adult Nursing Homes.

Deirdre Hennessey, Program Supervisor of the Jr.-Sr. Companion Program, said that some people in recovery become companions for an opportunity to volunteer as a first step to possible employment.

"Being a companion is often a stepping stone to being a full-time employee," Hennessey said. "The program is effective because it is coming from a peer, people who've lived through similar experiences and can give encouragement."

Hennessey said that she has seen companions go on to pursue a General Education Diploma (GED), go to college for the first time, attend college after a lapse, get PEER certification and find new jobs.

Currently, Carol is one of 41 companions. When asked what she finds rewarding about the program, she summed it up this way: "I'm doing what I like doing, helping people. This is me, this is who I am."

Adelphi Nursing Students Gain Experience with PROS and RTS



For a second year, Federation has opened its doors to students of Adelphi University's College of Nursing and Public Health.

For six weeks, twelve nursing students and 2 instructors will provide wellness education at the Patchogue Personalized Recovery Oriented Services (PROS) site and meet with Residential Transitional Support (RTS) clients for one day a week.

"Students gain experience working with a population that has mental health problems, as well as physical problems, such as diabetes, heart problems and conditions related to smoking," said Ryan Busuttill, Associate Director of Clinical Services.

Federation and Adelphi University began working on the partnership last year. Both institutions found that the partnership is a measure toward advancing excellence in healthcare by integrating services. Nursing students will run health education groups for PROS members on topics such as cardiovascular health, diabetes management, and men's health while the nurses in RTS are able to provide health and wellness information to individual clients according to their needs.

"It's a win-win situation," Busuttill said. "It gives the students experience, and it also helps our members gain additional information from people who are studying the medical field."

Healing and Community Engagement Go Hand in Hand



The Wyandanch Clinic is more than a facility for visiting a doctor or therapist. In February, Federation began offering weekly "Mindfulness" sessions. It will soon be followed with groups specifically to address issues for women, children (ages 6 and up) and parents.

Leading the Mindfulness group is Dan Stein, a Therapist with Federation, who educates participants about the philosophy of mindfulness and guides them in meditating.

"For those with a diagnosis, the Mindfulness sessions can help people navigate the world of mental illness," Stein said.

"It can help them gain perspective and view themselves from a compassionate lens, allowing them to step back and approach each moment more carefully and thoughtfully," Stein said. "It may help them move from an impulsive reaction to a conscious one."

Ryan Busuttill, Associate Director of Clinical Services, added that social support can be important to healing.

"Not only do groups help individuals with things such as stress reduction or parenting skills, but they give social support and encourage people to meet others who have similar issues," Busuttill said.

Group sessions are held weekly for 50 minutes. They are open-ended, so people can join in on any day.

Cherisse Plans a Bright Future, One Goal at a Time

When Cherisse sets a goal, she sticks with it.

For the past 10 years, Cherisse has made treatment for alcohol addiction and recovery a priority. During the summer of 2016, when she was set on getting certified as a home health care aide, she realized she needed help achieving her goal. That's when Cherisse came to Federation for assistance.

While Cherisse wholeheartedly set goals for herself, she often expected results to happen overnight. Federation staff worked with Cherisse to hold onto her goals while also having more realistic expectations. Not only did Federation staff help Cherisse keep on track with the certification program, they also attended to practical matters. For example, they provided Cherisse with needed school supplies and made sure she had a uniform.

Cherisse's determination, patience, and a clear understanding of what to expect have brought rewards. Today, she works three days a week as a home health care aide. She recently phoned Program Manager Phedra McCalla to thank Federation and compliment the staff for the encouragement and help they provided.

In particular, Cherisse, who is in her mid-40s, credits Care Coordinator Shaniqua Powell with making a significant difference in her life. Powell, who visits Cherisse at her home three to four times a week and follows up by phone, is now helping Cherisse focus on her next goal: Going to college.

With Powell's help, Cherisse is taking the first steps toward applying for college. Her goal is to study law. Step by step, there's little doubt that Cherisse will make that goal become a reality.

Shawn Provides Inspiration to Those in Recovery

Recovery can open up new possibilities. However, it takes a special person to talk openly about what life was like before treatment and recovery. Shawn is an example of someone who is eager to share experiences that will help others.

His story began in a housing project in Queens, where he grew up surrounded by a loving and supportive family. Yet, the neighborhood was hostile. Drugs and alcohol were prevalent. Not immune to the environment, Shawn developed a substance abuse problem and served a prison sentence.

Fast forward to today. "Recovery has given me a new life and endless possibilities going forward," said Shawn, now in his mid-50s and in his 11th year of working at Federation. He has been in treatment for mental illness for 29 years and free from drugs and alcohol for 24 years.



As a Self Help Advocate in Peer Support Services, Shawn facilitates self-improvement group meetings in Creedmoor Psychiatric Center, covering issues such as wellness and recovery, and works with outpatient clients in the community who may be in transitional residences or in shelters. He uses his own recovery as a model for others.

"As a Self Help Advocate, I have been able to help and assist individuals with mental illness get better and, in the process, use the same principles to stay well myself," Shawn said.

Whether he's holding group sessions to encourage people to quit smoking cigarettes, or helping someone with daily chores such as going to the bank and grocery shopping, Shawn is a shining example of the rewards of recovery.

"Even after 10 years, Shawn is still motivated every day to assist in the recovery of what can be a very challenging population," said June Morris, Program Manager, Outreach Services. "He comes to work with a smile on his face and gets everyone excited about working on recovery."

Morris said that Shawn has a knack for gaining the trust of clients and patients. For example, even if someone can't attend a Relapse Recovery group session, he is willing to meet one-on-one in hopes of providing support.

Training is a big part of Federation's Peer Advocacy program. Shawn and his colleagues attend an annual training workshop as well as programs throughout the year. In addition, hospital staff often calls on Shawn to help train other peer specialists.

Morris is not surprised that people are so receptive to hear Shawn's story. After all, she said, "He gives hope to everyone."

A Great Partnership: Federation and Mather Partial

Collaboration among service providers is key when serving the needs of individuals with mental illness, especially when they are in distress.

Federation has found a reliable partner in Mather Partial Hospitalization, which provides outpatient treatment intervention.

"It's a huge help to have a treatment provider that can handle outpatient care," said Ben Turner, a Program Supervisor for Residential Transitional Services (RTS) Team A. He noted that Mather Partial staff members respond to calls quickly and are eager to collaborate to serve the needs of the clients.

Likewise, Mather Partial frequently refers people to Federation for programs that help provide housing and assist with medication management, symptom management and community integration.

Turner recalled the story of Matthew, now age 22, who was in Mather Partial's program for several weeks when they referred him to the PROS program in West Babylon.

Working with PROS, Matthew, who has a diagnosis of bipolar disorder and ADHD, began learning daily living skills, such as keeping his environment clean and doing laundry. He started cooking and taking care of his appearance. The PROS program also provided job counseling.

Along with working with PROS, Matthew benefited from RTS services. Matthew wanted to live closer to his family, and the RTS team assisted Matthew in finding housing options near them. After moving in, Matthew transferred to the PROS Patchogue facility, which is closer to his new home. To top it off, Matthew has also found a job where he is thriving.

It's now been a year of living without major symptom flare-ups.

"Mather Partial helped Matthew and also did a great job in sending him to Federation's PROS program, which led to his getting help from RTS," Turner said. "Matthew has a lot of skills, but it was all these services combined that helped him to stabilize, helped him get a job, and secured him a place to live."

To assure that the organizations function well together, the Federation and Mather Partial teams meet every six or eight weeks to discuss the process of referrals.

As Turner suggests, a mutual respect between the organizations has developed. "The bottom line is about serving people in need," Turner concluded.

Philip Matcovsky, COO, Celebrates 30 Years with Federation

This year holds special meaning here at Federation. It marks the 45th anniversary of Federation as a social wellness agency as well as the 30th Anniversary for our Chief Operating Officer, Philip Matcovsky.



Philip began his career at Federation in 1987 as a counselor in Federation's homeless outreach program. Over the years, he worked his way up from counselor to field supervisor, to director, to COO. Part of his success can be attributed to the fact that he was never afraid to roll up his sleeves and get the job done, from janitorial duties, to serving as ad hoc HR director and facility manager, to buying and driving the agency's first van. Getting experience from the ground up is something he has never regretted.

Today, as Chief Operating Officer at Federation, Philip manages the day to day responsibilities of an agency with a \$48 million budget and more than 500 employees. He continues to focus on the needs of seniors, mental health consumers and families who are homeless—now from a strategic level, while he helps Federation adapt to fit the changing world of managed care.

For anyone who has worked directly with Philip, they know that one thing has and always will remain constant: Clients and employees are at the heart of the decisions that Philip makes every day at Federation. Helping individuals flourish, become productive participants in community life and achieve their dreams is his motivation.

Despite the demands of his job, Philip has served on advisory boards for Long Island Cares, the Suffolk Community College and the Patchogue/Medford School District. He has held faculty positions at Stony Brook University and Suffolk Community College and has presented at St. John's University, The New York Association for Psychosocial Rehabilitation Services and the United States Psychiatric Rehabilitation Association, among other venues. Most recently, Philip was the recipient of The Network for Social Work Management's Exemplar Award for excellence in Social Work Management, as well as Long Island Business News' prestigious leadership award, Around 50.

What he aims to impress upon community members and the staff at Federation is the need for empathy. Asking questions like, "What does it mean to be homeless?" he tasks staff to imagine not being able to wander into their own kitchen to make coffee in the morning. Empathy and resourcefulness help the staff serve clients successfully and with an open heart.

We congratulate Philip on his many achievements and successes here at Federation and wish him many more! Together, we look forward to the bright future ahead!



**Congratulations to all of
the Federation Team's
Accomplishments!**

- **Philip Matcovsky is celebrating his 30th anniversary with Federation**
- **Robin Ellison is celebrating her 20th anniversary with Federation**
- **Miriam Hirsch achieved her NY Peer Specialist certification**
- **Jessica Poelker became Certified in Healthcare Compliance (CHC) and was promoted to Assistant Corporate Compliance Officer; Associate Director of Compliance/Quality Management; Privacy Officer**

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